

ppm Mg dosage decreased the 200 ppb aluminum concentration to 33 ppb. There is clearly noting in Nagy to teach or encourage the skilled person to use less than 5 ppm Mg concentrations, with or without judicious selection of Mg to Al molar ratio and an excess alkalinity concentration of between 0.1-0.5 g/L alkali metal hydroxide as required in the applicants' claims.

According to the applicants' invention, the working molar ratio of Mg to aluminum of about 5-20:1, most preferably about 10:1, provides efficacious removal of aluminum. This is not obvious from Nagy and cannot be dismissed as an immaterial or insignificant difference. For example, the applicants have surprisingly found that to maximize aluminum removal while not overloading the brine circuit with excessive solids loadings, a 90% Al removal efficiency was obtained at a working Mg/Al ratio of about 10:1 as illustrated in instant example. Less useful removal (50%) is illustrated at a lower working ratio of 1 ppm Mg for 0.2 ppm Al (5:1).


The applicants' results, using the conditions specified in the present claims, are not obvious from Nagy and it is respectfully submitted, in the circumstances, that the applicants' invention as claimed should be found patentable. Accordingly, reconsideration of the Section 103(a) rejection and allowance of all claims, including new claims 9 and 10, are respectfully solicited.

The objections to the drawings have been noted. It is requested that correction be held in abeyance until the application is allowed.

All issues having been addressed, the application is thought to be in allowable condition. Accordingly, allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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